

With the Thane of Cawdor, the writer of this article might say, whilst he was exploring the beauties of Dunkeld, "So foul and fair a day I have not seen," for it was one of incessant rain, which yet had no power to veil the enchantments of the scene, or to restrain his steps in quest of them; never, indeed, did he find "the wildly devious walk" more delightful than that which he took alone, on the banks of the Tay, by one of the most silent, solemn, and sequestered paths that he had ever trodden. The freshness of the woods, the murmuring of the river, the noble aspect of the hills, presenting new features at every winding of the road, and arrayed in sober purple, or the deepest azure, filled his mind with admiration and delight, undisturbed by any trace of man, except what was here and there afforded by a solitary corn-field, with its sheaves still standing, or a lonely cottage, perched at some angle of a rock. As he retraced his steps, the grey tower of the ruined cathedral, bosomed in woods, and overhung by lofty hills purpled with heath, the few houses of the town clustering around it, and the broad river, winding along the valley, with its majestic, though modern bridge, formed a picture which nothing could have prevented him from sketching but the torrents of rain, that would have rendered the sketch illegible; and which nothing could have consoled him for leaving, without, at least, an attempt to fix it, but the hope that he should at some future period revisit it, under circumstances more favourable to the lengthened contemplation of its beauties, which their variety and richness deserved.

PLATE III.—THE SYCAMORE AT BISHOPTON.

The soil of Scotland seems particularly favourable to the Sycamore, which grows in it to a great size, wearing an undaunted aspect, and throwing out its bold arms, as if in defiance of the utmost inclemency of the skies.

The Sycamore at Bishopton in Renfrewshire, is the property of Sir John Maxwell, Bart. It is a stately spreading tree, twenty feet in circumference at the ground, about sixty feet in height, and contains seven hundred and twenty feet of solid timber. It stands on the banks of the Clyde, on the opposite side of which the insulated rock of Dumbarton rises in solitary majesty, crowned with its strong fortress, of little use in "these weak piping times of peace," but once deemed the "Key of Scotland;" and still exciting a melancholy interest as the place where Wallace, that hero dear alike to the sober page of history, and the wilder graces of tradition, was delivered up to his enemies by the treachery of a pretended friend.

PLATE IV.—THE WYCH ELMS AT POLLOC.

This graceful group of Wych Elms stands on the banks of the river Cart, at Polloc in Renfrewshire, just beneath the site of the castle formerly occupied by the ancestors of Sir John Maxwell, Bart., the present proprietor, (and, since the forfeiture of the Earl of Nithsdale, chief of the family of Maxwell,) from about the middle of the thirteenth century. As they are opposite to a row of trees of the same kind, which are now nearly all decayed, it may be presumed that they are of considerable antiquity. The ground on which they stand is fraught with interesting recollections, lying between Crookstone Castle, the residence of Lord Darnley, and the field of Langside, and adjoining the ancient Roman camps of Northwood and Camphill.

The principal tree in this group is of extraordinary health and vigour, and does not exhibit the slightest appearance of decay; it is completely covered with foliage, and its leaves, instead of being small, as is generally the case in old trees, are large and luxuriant; it still sends forth its tribute of new shoots annually to the spring, and continues to increase both in height and girth. In 1812, it was ten feet ten inches in circumference at five feet from the ground; in 1824, it measured eighteen feet one inch in circumference at the surface of the ground, and eleven feet ten inches at five feet from the ground: its height is eighty-eight feet, and it contains six hundred and sixty-nine feet of solid timber.